



The Unity Press

Partnership of the Americas Deployment 2007

UNITAS 48-07 Finishes Atlantic Phase

UNITAS Atlantic 48-07 brought together naval forces from: Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Spain, and the United States from May 4-13 in the South Atlantic to conduct exercises at sea. Finally pulling into Puerto Belgrano, Argentina

The multinational task group participated in flight operations, underway replenishments, tactical maneuvering to improve operations between navies as they sailed around the South Atlantic.

"UNITAS Atlantic was an outstanding opportunity to operate with ships from: Argentina, Brazil, Chile and Spain. Operating as a rather large task group, I was impressed with the planning, execution and professionalism of the other navies as we conducted numerous tactical

exercises," said Cmdr. Victor Cooper, USS Pearl Harbor (LSD 52) Commanding Officer. "Our relationship building events while in port, significantly contributed to the fun experienced while conducting the at-sea events."

The exchange of military personnel between sister ships, live fire exercises, surface and air threats to test the crew's reaction to a variety of scenarios as preparation for the Final Battle Problem.

"I would like to learn more about their navies, both through language and system capabilities, because I think with such a knowledge base, we will come a stronger allied force," said Operation Specialist (SW) 2nd Class Marcus Drayden,

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By MC2 Francioni
USS Mitscher (DDG-57) flies the Chief Petty Officer Flag during a maneuvering exercise as part of UNITAS Atlantic 48-07

VC -6 Simulates Live Air Attack During UNITAS 48-07



By MC2 Francioni
A drone from Fleet Composite Squadron (VC-6) fires from the flight deck of USS Pearl Harbor (LSD-52)

Firing two BQM-74E target drones off the USS Pearl Harbor (LSD 52) flight deck, the Fleet Composite (VC) 6 Squadron supported the UNITAS exercise underway in the South Atlantic by simulating a live air attack May 7.

VC-6 crew provides targeted services to air and surface units of the Fleet and allied forces. In the case of UNITAS, they provided drone missiles and ran the scenario. In other instances, these scenarios could include land-based operations, gunnery trainings, or terrorist attacks.

"Our mission is to train and test the ship's protection procedures against time-critical-high speed targets," said Aviation Structural Mechanic 3rd Class Alfredo Contreras. "We use realistic scenarios that force the ship to react to and be selective

enough to define not only the attack, but also determine which ship is the target of the attack and how to execute the appropriate defensive measures."

(VC) 6 team members ensure the proper configuration of the target and maintenance as well as troubleshooting before it launches.

According to Lt. Rico Magbanua, remote control operator, crew members from VC-6 are important key players in the process of breaking out, building-up, transporting, loading, arming, starting and launching of the target. Being familiar and paying attention to detail are important to establish safety and an effective operation. UNITAS 48-07, a multinational exercise hosted by Argentina this year, is designed to increase interoperability of navies in the

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Work-ups Task Group 40.0 in UNITAS

Partnership of the Americas Task Group 40.0 is currently in the final stages of UNITAS exercises work-up phase. USS Pearl Harbor along with partner nation navies from Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Spain, and the United States, and it has completed numerous evolutions during the Atlantic phase of UNITAS supporting The Chief of Naval Operation's (CNO) vision of a 1000 ship global maritime force.

The Partnership of the Americas Task Group 40.0 is deployed to support UNITAS 48-07 and consists of dock landing ship USS Pearl Harbor (LSD 52), guided-missile destroyer USS Mitscher (DDG 57), guided-missile frigate USS Samuel B. Roberts (FFG 58) and Chilean frigate CS Almirante Latorre (FFG 14).

Completed work-up exercises include leap-frog maneuvers and divisional tactics, where partner nation ships moved strategically around one another

displaying excellent interoperability. Also completed has been a successful take-off and landing of a Brazilian Navy Twin Squirrel helicopter and passenger exchanges (PASSEX) with the Argentine Navy.

18 Argentine sailors and marines arrived on USS Pearl Harbor and have since learned their way around an American warship during a PASSEX. "We are learning how the American Navy works," said Argentine marine infantry sergeant Perez Ricardo. "It is interesting to see how other navies operate and to get to know some of the crew members. I am surprised at how many people I can communicate with both verbally and non-verbally."

Another highlight of the UNITAS work-ups was an Argentine Navy Vessel Boarding Search and Seizure (VBSS) team that conducted operations aboard USS Pearl Harbor. "They were very



By MC2 RiveraCorrea
Boatswain's Mate 1st Class Everett Albright, flight deck safety officer, over looks flight deck operations on board USS Pearl Harbor (LSD 52)

tactical when they entered the ship, said Electrician's Mate Seaman (SW) Jessie Gappa, a member of Pearl Harbor's VBSS team. "Although the VBSS team concept is relatively new to the Argentine Navy, they operated with great efficiency and carried themselves with the utmost professionalism." ★

Reservists Play Key Role in UNITAS

How do a Foreign Service officer, a NASA pilot, an elementary music teacher and an ice cream company maintenance engineer support a military exercise in South America? When they make up a cadre of reservists, on board the USS Pearl Harbor at sea supporting Commander Destroyer Squadron Four Zero during UNITAS 48-07 Atlantic Phase.

Currently underway off the central Argentina coast, ships from UNITAS 48-07 are benefiting from nine reservists embarked on USS Pearl Harbor (LSD 52) who are chronicling the movements within the exercise so that leadership can better analyze lessons learned. Despite very different civilian backgrounds, the reservists have a breadth of Navy and civilian experience and maintain their readiness for missions just like this one.

"This is the first time we have put together this sort of reconstruction cell, and out of the 16 sailors working it, nine of them are reservists," said Lt. Cmdr. Donald Voelbel, the active-duty operations officer from Commander Destroyer

Squadron Four Zero. "The reservists provide an added benefit in exercises. Anytime we bring a fresh look to how we put things together, either in concept or development, it improves the process."

But the benefits do not just come to the



By Lt. Kupec
Reservists on board USS Pearl Harbor (LSD 52) support Destroyer Squadron (DESRON) 40 during UNITAS 48-07 Atlantic Phase

unit, but the reservists as well.

"Working exercises is important for reservists as well," Voelbel added. "It's truly how they keep up to date on current tactics and procedures."

Information Tech 2nd Class Scott Anderson agreed. A network engineer at Aegis Mortgage Co., Anderson is one of the few reservists in the unit without prior active duty experience. "My education helped, but it is this sort of annual training hands on that really makes me a better asset to the Navy." Anderson has been a reservist for five years.

From the Houston area, this group of reservists has been actively involved in exercise reconstruction, working day and night to chart where ships have been and the steps leading up to and executing exercise events.

"Our unit is a very diversified one," said Lt. Steve Coffee, an FMC Technologies project manager who was stationed on USS Hawes (FFG 53) during part of his seven years of active duty as a surface warfare officer. "In the approximately 40 members of our unit, we have surface, subsurface and aviation representatives. We have Spanish and Portuguese speakers, sailors who know IT and others who know

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UNITAS

Communication Supervisor from USS Mitscher (DDG 57).

Each ship's crew works together, showing the results of their rigorous training to demonstrate combat readiness. Units were able to utilize all aspects of air and surface warfare operability for this. The scenario's objective was to train multi-national task forces to conduct naval operations in a multi-threat environment.

"It was a good experience to work with multi-national navies," said Operation Specialist 3rd Class Damario Norwood, bridge watch stander from Pearl Harbor. "We built good relationships between Sailors."

Upon arrival to Puerto Belgrano May 11, Sailors will continue their training and ca-

maraderie with seamanship competitions, damage control exercises and sporting events.

United States participants in UNITAS is Task Group 40.0 conducting Partnership of the Americas (POA). POA consists of dock landing ship USS Pearl Harbor (LSD 52), guided missile destroyer USS Mitscher (DDG 57), guided missile frigate USS Samuel B. Roberts (FFG 58) and Chilean frigate CS Almirante Latorre (FFG 14), under the leadership of Capt. Randy Snyder, Commander Destroyer Squadron Four Zero. ★



By MCSN Horvath
Sailors from USS Pearl Harbor (LSD 52) off-load pallets of donated items, for delivery in Support of Project Handclasp



By MCSN Horvath
Ship's Serviceman 2nd Class (SW) Jason Valero overlooks an Argentine tug assisting USS Pearl Harbor (LSD 52) as it moors in Puerto Belgrano Harbor



By Ensign Dawson
Sailors interact with children from "Casa del Nino" in Puerto Belgrano



By MC2 Francioni
UNITAS Atlantic 48-07 participants sail in formation during an photo exercise



By SN Singhphat
Boatswain's mate Seaman Ricardo B. Gomez charts surface contacts while on bridge watch aboard USS Pearl Harbor (LSD 52)



By MC2 Riveracorrea
A hoseman relieves the nozzelman on the fire team while preparing to combat a Class Bravo fire



By MC2 Riveracorrea
Lt. Dennis Wheeler, USS Pearl Harbor's Chaplain, along with Sailors paint a wall at the Eva Peron hospital in Punta Alta, Argentina

RESERVIST

how to train. It's quite a collection."

One of those bilingual members is Lt. Cmdr. John Ibarra, who works as a U.S. State Department Foreign Service officer in Nogales, Mexico. "The goal is to be a unit that replicates the specializations within the squadron so that we can help them surge at any given time, such as a UNITAS exercise." Ibarra spent 12 years on active duty in nuclear engineering and has worked as a reservist for the past five years.

Working in five-hour shifts to ensure alertness, the reservists are alongside active component partners, tracking the exercise play by play in real time, listening to and copying tactical commands, using software to help chart ships' movement, and ultimately providing an overarching picture of the entire exercise in real time.

"We're giving them a big-picture view not just from one ship's perspective, but gathering all the information, so they really can look back at the exercise from all sides, all angles," said Lt. Cmdr. Bill Rieke, a NASA research pilot with 10 years of active duty experience flying FA-18s and another seven years in the reserves.

"The final battle problem runs 24 hours a day, so unless you have us operating during all that time, you will lose important situational awareness," said Electronics Tech First Class Kent Page, who works as a civilian at Dreyer's Ice Cream as a maintenance engineer and who spent eight years of active duty in submarine service. The unit spends its 24 drill days throughout the year training to ensure readiness so that they can be called up to meet the squadron's needs at any given

time and supporting numerous Destroyer Squadron 40 planning trips to South and Central America. "We have two very active reserve units that provide incredibly flexible support to an exercise schedule which includes UNITAS Atlantic and Pacific, PANAMAX which involves over 20 countries in exercising defense of the Panama Canal, Silent Forces Exercises with Peru, and Team Work South with Chile. Our reserve personnel are totally integrated in the squadron's planning and execution of exercises. We would not be nearly as effective a unit without their dedicated support and superb execution," stated Capt. Randy Snyder, Commander, Destroyer Squadron 40. ★



By MC2 Riveracorrea
VC-6 team prepares to launch a drone from USS Pearl Harbor's (LSD 52) flight deck



By MC2 Riveracorrea
VC-6 team makes the last adjustments before firing a drone from USS Pearl Harbor (LSD 52) flight deck



By MC2 Francioni
A drone from Fleet Composite Squadron (VC-6) fires from the flight deck of USS Pearl Harbor

VC 6

Americas and throughout the world. Nations participating this year are Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Spain and the United States.

UNITAS, which has been executed for 48 years, strengthens relationships with partner nations during various maritime scenarios. These exercises are conducted annually in Atlantic and Pacific waters around South America. Along with navies from the Americas, Spain is also participating in UNITAS Atlantic phase this year.

The U.S. Navy representative is Task Group 40.0, which consists of Dock Landing Ship USS Pearl Harbor (LSD 52), Guided-Missile Destroyer USS Mitscher (DDG 57), Guided Missile Frigate USS Samuel B. Roberts (FFG 58) and Chilean Frigate CS Almirante Latorre (FFG 14), under the command of Capt. Randy Snyder, COMDESRON 40.

(VC) 6 Firebees, provide the assets needed to train global maritime forces to be combat ready through a variety of simulated threats. ★

Partnership of the Americas Completes a Successful Port Visit in Buenos Aires

Partnership of the Americas (POA) Task Group 40.0 finished its port visit April 30 in Buenos Aires, after the ship's crew participated in diverse events ashore in support of Partnership of the Americas 2007 deployment.

While in port, Project Handclasp materials including an ambulance were delivered to directly support the Partnership of the Americas mission. Medical supplies, sewing machines, food and medical supplies were some of the items donated to Stella Marris and the Red Cross of Argentina.

"We are proud to present an ambulance to the Association of Volunteer Fire Fighters of Las Parejas, Santa Fe. This ambulance was donated by The

Wilmette, Illinois Fire Department because of efforts from Firefighter and Paramedic Jamie Johnson after a visit to Las Parejas in 2004," said Capt. Randy Snyder, Commander Destroyer Squadron Four Zero.

Immediately after the press conference, USS Pearl Harbor (LSD 52) Sailors provided guided tours to a youth group from Argentina accompanied by local television and print news representatives.

That night Pearl Harbor hosted a reception, where several foreign dignitaries were invited as well as the U.S. ambassador to Argentina and Vice Chief of Naval Operations of Argentina, Admiral Benito Rotolo.

More than 300 people attended,



By MCSN Horvath
U.S. Ambassador to Argentina, Earl Wayne speaks to the media during a Press Conference

including government and military officials from Argentina and other partner nations.

"Tonight we come together to celebrate the arrival of Partnership of the Americas participants in Buenos Aires. With this event we honor the cooperation between our countries and throughout the region," said Snyder.

During the event, music played, food and drinks were provided while multinational

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Partnership of the Americas conducts PASSEX with Spanish Ship

Partnership of the Americas Task Group 40.0 conducted Passing Exercises (PASSEX) during April 20-21 with the Spanish Frigate Santa Maria (F 81) while underway during the Partnership of the Americas (POA) 2007.

The PASSEX contributes to improved working relationships between the two Navies and serves as a foundation for increasing responsiveness and promoting regional security initiatives.

Operations Specialist 2nd Class (SW) Miluska Salazar gave a tour to a Spanish Sailor from the Santa Maria (F 81) while the ships were close together. "It was very exciting because he was waving at his friends and telling me about life on his ship while we conducted the PASSEX," said Salazar. "I was lucky to be communicating with him face-to-face while our respective ship's talked over the radio."

During the actual exercises, the ships demonstrated seamanship evolutions, conducted coordinated tactical maneuvering and communications exercises in preparation for any possible real-life maritime scenarios.

"The PASSEX was a great opportunity to prepare for the upcoming UNITAS Atlantic exercise in May hosted by Argentina in which the Santa Maria and all the Task Group ships will participate in," stated Capt. Randy Snyder, Task Group Commander.

Chief Quartermaster (SW) James Weisberg was impressed with the smoothness of the operation. "Everything from internal and external communications, the distance and speed of the ships, and flight operations went exceptionally well," said Weisberg. "It is always a pleasure to work with foreign Navies, everyone involved comes together to achieve a common goal and when you have bright and talented individuals working on both sides, the end result is always a success."

POA Task Group 40.0 is made up of USS Pearl Harbor (LSD 52), guided missile destroyer USS Mitscher (DDG 57), guided missile frigate USS Samuel B. Roberts (FFG 58), and Chilean frigate CS Almirante Latorre (FFG 14).

It is led by Capt. Randy Snyder, Commander Destroyer Squadron Four Zero.

POA 2007 is a deployment focused on enhancing cooperative partnerships with regional maritime services throughout Latin America, South America, and the Caribbean through a variety of exercises and events at sea and on shore. ★



By MC2 Riveracorrea
Frigate Santa Maria (F 81) conducts a Passing Exercise (PASSEX) while underway in the South Atlantic Ocean

Project Handclasp Reaches out to Buenos Aires

The Partnership of the Americas Task Group held a pier side press conference to present donated items from Project Handclasp to local organizations April 27 in Buenos Aires, Argentina.

Project Handclasp is a U.S. Navy sponsored humanitarian project that was founded in 1962, that through a wide variety of donors makes items such as basic medical supplies, toys, hygiene products, sewing machines, food items and at times large items such as ambulances available to those in need.

"One of the exciting evolutions that we will complete while here in Buenos Aires which directly supports Partnership of the Americas mission of fostering friendly mutual cooperation and understanding between our people is the distribution of Project Handclasp materials," said Capt. Randy Snyder, Commander, Destroyer Squadron Four Zero, "This is why we call our deployment a Partnership as we work to improve our tactics, and forge closer ties with each other as militaries and friends.

During the press conference, an ambulance was presented to Mr. Pedro Zanini, President of the Association of Volunteer Fire Fighters of Las Parejas, Santa Fe.

The ambulance was donated by the Wilmette, Ill. Fire Department because of efforts from firefighter and paramedic Jaime Johnson who visited Las Parejas in 2004. The sincere appreciation for the gift expressed by Mr. Zanini and the representatives from Las Parejas was evident to all.

The ceremony also included a presentation of high nutrition meals and disaster relief supplies to representatives from the Red Cross of Argentina.

Stella Maris, the Argentine Navy's equivalent to Navy Relief Society, was also presented with sewing machines, medical supplies and hygiene products to aid in the care of people in need in Argentina.

Project Handclasp is coordinated by USS Pearl Harbor Command Chaplain Lt. Dennis Wheeler. "It's an awesome feeling to give so much away, even though we may never see these items in use, we know that the people who receive these materials appreciate them very much."

Wheeler coordinates with contacts on shore to ensure all the necessary arrangements are made to receive the donated items. "We began with 140 Handclasp pallets to be off loaded on this deployment," said Wheeler.



By MC2 Riveracorrea
Sailors and Marines offload an ambulance which will be donated to the Buenos Aires Community

"This delivery was a little more significant because of the donation of the ambulance. I think that we certainly made a lasting impression here." Partnership of the Americas Task Group 40.0 consists of amphibious dock landing ship USS Pearl Harbor (LSD 52), guided missile destroyer USS Mitscher (DDG 57), guided missile frigate USS Samuel B. Roberts (FFG 58) and Chilean frigate CS Almirante Latorre (FFG 14). ★

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guests discussed their role in upcoming exercises and UNITAS.

According to Culinary Specialist 1st Class (SW) Roberto Yngson, food coordinator, the reception was a complete success, the cooks showed pride and professionalism.

"Having the Argentina guests onboard is a great opportunity for us as U.S. ambassadors to show what we are capable of," said Yngson.

The reception was an ideal opportunity to bring nations together and foster their relationships.

"We are honored to be here in Argentina and look forward to working with the Navy, at UNITAS," said Snyder.

Sailors toured the city and its historical places, shopped and interacted with Sailors from different ships.

"The city tour was educational; we had the chance to see the pink house which is the

President's residency, and we learned about Buenos Aires history. It was a great tour," said Yngson. ★



MC2 Riveracorrea
From a camera's view point you see the world as it is meant to be seen "picturesque"



By Lt. Kupec
Spanish Flag flies over the Frigate Santa Maria's (F 81) flight deck

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